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THE KISS;

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A COMEDY,

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1812

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY STEPHEN CLARKE.

[from the first London edition, of 1811.]

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PROLOGUE.

spoken by mr. MARSHALL.

Prologues, like faces in the public street,
Though much resembling, none alike we meet ;
Should combinations rare attract the view,
No single feature is intirely new.

With various modes essay the writing tribe,
Of supplication, flattery, threat, or bribe :
Since custom asks some words before the play,
The wonted homage we respectful pay.

Whilst numerous orbs from the dramatic skies
Have set in darkness never more to rise ;

“ *Beaumont and Fletcher*, those twin stars that run
“ Their glorious course round *Shakspeare's* golden
sun :

Though in their path eccentric, dim with age,
May yet supply fresh lights to glad the stage.
To drop the metaphor, tis fit we tell,
Lest like the daw with borrow'd plumes we swell,
These ancient bards our underplot supplied,
Transform'd indeed, adapted, purified :
If neatly blended, and adjusted right,
No flaw or patch incongruous shock the sight,
Candor will not the license now refuse,
Granted to *Cibber* and to *Farquhar's* muse.*

Superfluous is the deprecating strain,
“ With merit useless, and without it vain ;”
Yet let not in this sharply judging time,
The wish to please be construed to a crime ;
Our hopes to you with confidence we trust,
Convinced a british audience will be just.

* See “ *Love makes a Man*,” and the “ *Inconstant*,”
of these authors ; in both which successful plays BEAU-
MONT and FLETCHER are put under heavier contri-
bution than in the present instance.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Drury-Lane company at the Lyceum.

Count Olmedo	-	Mr. Putnam
Octavio	- - -	— Waldegrave
Leandro	- - -	— De Camp
Sebastian	- - -	— Ray
Gaspar	- - -	— Wrench
Bartolo	- - -	— Dowton
Lopez	- - -	— Lovegrove
Diego	- - -	— Knight
Pedro	- - -	— Maddocks
Sancho	- - -	— Evans
Perez	- - -	— Webb
Orelia	- - -	Miss Duncan
Amaranta	- - -	Mrs. Orger
Phœbe	- - -	— Scott
Landlady	- - -	Miss Tidswell

Algauzils, Servants, Masqueraders.

SCENE—Seville.

NOTE.

The hint of the following comedy, as far as relates to the discovery of a secret door, was suggested by the perusal of a tale in Mr. Ellis's "Specimen of early english romances,"—in adapting a part of Fletcher's "Spanish curate" as the underplot, I had conceived that an endeavor to familiarize the public with scenes so excellent, yet so little known and so incapable of being represented in their original form, would deserve encouragement.

THE KISS.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*a street in Seville.*

enter GASPAR *and* SEBASTIAN.

Gas. A prisoner in her chamber ; that's the tale !

Seb. I cannot credit it. A married lady
Of such unblemish'd carriage, so remote
From fickleness and folly ! shall I tell you ?
The count's wild jealousy sees double, Gaspar ;
Creating what it fears.

Gas. Henceforth be thou
The women's advocate ; thou'll ne'er want fees.
The count has sense ; by all the world esteem'd
Open and just : men of such dispositions
Suspect not without cause : tis passing strange
A woman like the countess : a fair woman,
A young fair woman ! should thus keep aloof
From all society ! there's meaning in it.
Women who love to see and to be seen,
Keep not their chamber willingly. The count
Sees little company ; scarce goes abroad,
And is at home a stern secluded man.

Seb. What are the circumstances of the story ?

Gas. What I have heard, I'll tell you. The last
night
Before they left their country seat at Palma,
A strange occurrence it is said took place.
The count was gone abroad ; the lady walk'd

B

To enjoy the evening breezes in her garden ;
 Tempted to hear the warbling nightingales,
 She staid till somewhat late ; unlucky chance
 Brought home the count before the expected time.
 For stealing to the bower—

Seb. Say you the bower ?

Gas. Yes, in the bower—a sound of mingled voices

Was heard distinctly ; nay, report declares
 A parting kiss was absolutely given.
 The count alarmed and angry drew his sword,
 But entering found Orelia there alone :
 He raged and threat'ned—she disdainful, sullen,
 Refused all explanation.

Seb. Who can guess

The amorous knight ; for one we must suppose !

Gas. There we are all at fault. Our friend Leandro,

I hear has recently return'd to Seville ;
 A wealthy heir, young, gay, and liberal ;
 Now from pure charity were this same spark
 Acquainted with the countess, I would pledge
 My rapier to an egg-shell he's the man.

Seb. See what it is to have a reputation.
 No butter woman's daughter makes a trip,
 But tis Leandro's business ; brown or fair,
 Lofty or low, she wears a cap, and so forth,
 And these suffice an universal lover.

LEANDRO enters from a house in the back scene, followed by SANCHO.

Leand. Inquire what hour the curate is at leisure,
 And bring me instant word.

San. I will obey, sir.

[*exit*

Gas. Why—tis Leandro : so—your humble servant.

Are these your lodgings, next door to the count ?

Leand. O my good friends—my fellow students,
 welcome ;

What at your hard meat still, your musty maxims,

Your modes and syllogisms ? glory now
Should be your only goddess : leave your logic
And seek the camp ; tis there we live as men should :
Out of our trammels.

Gas. Yes, you learn abundance
Of new devices. The report hath reach'd us—
Your equipage and your expense : your treats
And balls to ladies. Who led off the dance ?
Leandro certainly. Whose feather waved
The proudest ? who his rapier flourish'd best ?
Leandro was the answer ; only he.
Praised by the women, envied by the men.

Leand. You are merry, signiors. Well indulge
your humor.

Seb. And, pr'ythee, what has drawn thee back to
Seville ?

Gas. A pair of black eyes, truly.

Seb. That same magnet
Attracts him still. Are we to wish you joy ?

Leand. Nay, gentlemen this raillery s out of tune.
And yet should it prove true, pray where's the wonder ?

There is a period when we must grow wise,
And in domestic quiet sit us down.

Seb. Why—he grows serious on it.

Gas. 'Tis the fact,
The man designs to marry.

Leand. Ay, pray come ;
Perchance you'll see a handsome house and gardens.
I'll make you welcome ; only, sirs, be temperate ;
I'll have no riot.

Gas. Shall we see the lady ?

Leand. Yes, at a distance : no close salutations,
Such as I oft have heard the english practise.
Sure men are mad ; a fond provocative,
By their own hands too offer'd. If you see
My wife even through her veil, twill be enough.

Seb. You've chosen a fit lodging for your purpose,
Apt, and convenient. A sly hypocrite. (*aside*)

Gas. A marvellous pretty tale this ; but remember

Husbands wear swords.

Leand. Nay, what d'ye mean, I pray ?

Seb. Look not with that grave face: d'ye think us blind ?

A friend should give the counsel of a friend.

Gas. You'd better own it—we must ev'n laugh at you.

Well, if our syllogisms can be useful,

You will know where to find us.

Leand Hah, mosquitoes,

Your wit is passing shrewd ; bites in all weathers ;

I shall not pose myself to guess your meaning ;

Tis hardly worth inquiry.

Gas. Make the best on't ;

And so farewell. Ha, ha—be wise and secret.

[*exeunt Gaspar and Sebastian*]

Leand. Ev'n get you gone. This is some trick to gull me.

No matter. Angry husbands ! swords ! and murder.

A trick, a trick—they know not yet my meaning ;

Hereafter I may trust them. Much I wonder

Sancho returns not. Well, I'll walk awhile,

And view my forces with a soldier's eye. [*exit*]

SCENE II—a hall in count OLMEDO'S house.

enter PEDRO.

Ped. I'm scandalized at these proceedings here. My lady's sorely wrong'd—why, tis reported, Not even the maids have access to her chamber ; The door kept strictly lock'd ! the wary count From his possession will not trust the key.

Olm. (within) Pedro.

Ped. A moment wait, sir. Such a jewel, Twould be my pride to wear upon my breast, Not in a casket hide it.

Olm. Pedro.

Ped. Coming.

enter count OLMEDO.

Olm. Has Bartolo been here yet ?

Ped. No, my lord.

Olm. Nor sent a message, nor a letter ?

Ped. None, sir.

Olm. That's strange. The advocate can give good counsel ;

But I must wait his leisure. Patience, patience,
The remedy of fools ; I must submit to it.

How many years of service hast thou pass'd
Beneath my roof ?

Ped. Thirty good years and more.

Olm. Some thirty years, a portion of man's life :
How large and how irrevocable.

Ped. Never,

In all the time, wish'd I to change my station ;
Content and happy.

Olm. Thou should'st then be honest.

Ped. Your lordship doubts me not ?

Olm. No, no ; not that.

Secret, I mean.

Ped. Yes, sir, when I am trusted.

Olm. Hah—a shrewd fellow this ; he thinks to
worm

My meaning out. (*aside*) So, you may leave me,
Pedro ;

Nay, nay, come back. Thou saidst just now, that I
Was an indulgent master : couldst thou be
As true a servant ?

Ped. Put me to the trial.

Olm. What dost thou think of women ?

Ped. Think of women !

Olm. Ay, think of women. Didst thou ne'er think
on them ?

Ped. Lord, sir—I'm but as may be call'd a servant :
They are beyond my reach of comprehension.

Olm. Nay, of their honesty, I mean.

Ped. O, that's

A mystery, subject more for faith than reason.

I'm but an unskill'd scholar.

Olm. Thou dost think then
Tis not to be relied on.

Ped. Heaven forbid ;
I merely thought the best way to secure it
Was to guard o'er it well.

Olm. Upon my faith,
Well spoken, Pedro. I shall dine abroad.

Ped. I wish your lordship a good appetite.

Olm. Know you this key ?

Ped. Not, sir, I think exactly.
But would you please to trust it to my hands.

Olm. Ha—trust it—no—tis safer in my own. (*apart*)
Now, Pedro, tell me honestly, come nearer,
Hast thou observed in all thy course of service
Nothing that woke suspicion of thy mistress ?
Speak it out plainly—fear not to offend me.
I should be happier if I knew the worst.

Ped. Nothing, my lord, whatever.

Olm. No disguises,
No mysteries, no spies with nods and shrugs,
Intelligibly speaking more than words :
Didst notice any ancient gentlewoman,
She jugglers, that can serve their friends by proxy,
Come to her in my absence ?

Ped. None, my lord.
Indeed your noble nature is abused :
If servant might presume to note his mistress,
A lady of more matron-like deportment,
I'd swear my eyes ne'er saw.

Olm. Get thee away.
All are confederated to deceive me.
Why thus expose my weakness ? a strange whim
Just pass'd my brain. (*aside*) You may attend your
business—

A foolish fancy—you may go, nay—leave me ;
My mind is alter'd ; I shall dine at home.

[*exit Pedro*]

Wretched I am, dishonor'd I will not be,
Can vigilance prevent it—to the countess—
Her silence or confession stamps my fate.

[*exit*]

SCENE III—*the countess's apartment.*

enter ORELIA from an inner chamber.

Ore. How long must this captivity endure?
Base the suggestion, baser still the means.
By which Olmedo tries me ; all my actions
Were ever pure ; my conduct scrupulous ;
My mind untainted with a thought disloyal—
Unworthy degradation—(*Olmedo knocks*)
Tis Olmedo.

enter OLMEDO, ORELIA looks scornfully upon him.

Ore. You came to bid good morrow, I presume,
Now that important function is discharged,
Pray leave me to my pleasures.

Olm. Pleasures, lady.

Ore. The rarest, sir, amusements ever new.
Do not I wander in enchanting groves,
And in triumphal chariots breathe the air?
Do not I taste delicious banquets, music,
Delightful converse. fit society ;
And then at night behold the festive dance
Led up by youth and beauty ?

Olm. Sure, you dream.

Ore. Why should you so imagine ? am not I
Olmedo's countess, heir to rich Alvarez ?
By birth and wealth entitled to enjoy
All that the world calls pleasure.

Olm. You say true,
All pleasures are at your command.

Ore. Yes, all
That can be relish'd in two small apartments,
Some twenty feet by twenty ; let me see now,
Weary with wholesome exercise, I rest on
A comfortable bed with decent hangings ;
A toilet, too, at which I set my beauties,
Alas ! but no admirers. Then for books,
Five musty schoolmen, a fit lady's library,

With an old twangling lute to aid my voice.

Olm. I'm glad you are so happy.

Ore. But the best
Is yet unmention'd.

Olm. What is that, I pray?

Ore. A husband, so indulgent to my wishes,
That he prevents them ere I make them known.
Unlike those beings whose capricious tempers
Will scruple little, through a vain caprice,
To trample on humanity's best feelings,
And desolate the bosom of true love.
Do you know such a monster?

Olm. Are you wise?

Ore. Alas! too sensible; for never fool
Suffer'd indignity and grief like mine.

(she turns from him weeping)

Olm. Orelia, but one question?

Ore. No. 'Tis useless;
Forbear, repeat it not.

Olm. Give me your hand.

(Olmedo taking her hand)

'Tis moist with tears; come, I will kiss it dry.

Ore. This is vain mockery, I pray you cease.

Olm. No, on my soul, by this and this, it is not.

Ore. You love me still then.

Olm. Better than my life;
Beyond all things but honor.

Ore. Ay, this honor,
Incomprehensible to woman's wit,
This honor chooses you a noble office;
Do you not feel degraded, thus to lose
The husband in the gaoler? morn and eve,
And duly at mid-noon, mocking your prisoner
With shows of love and visionary hopes?

Olm. I have a name to guard—an honest one;
Lady, the husband's sanction'd rights are mine,
No sharp revilings from a woman's tongue
Shall bend my stubbornness; I am thy lord
By marriage vows; obedience is my due,
And I exact it; to protect and cherish thee

Hath been my earliest and my latest care,
Even now my heart is rebel to my judgment ;
I have fulfill'd my duties, do thou thine.

Ore. Talk you of sanction'd rights, am I without them ?

I claim your love, esteem, and confidence,
Best guardians to a wife ; restore me these,
And then we meet on equal ground of duty.

Why do you treat me thus ?

Olm. That night, that night.

Ore. Restrain such idle fancies.

Olm. But explain

One circumstance, and empires were your own
Had I the power to give ?

Ore. All that I know
I have explained already.

Olm. Tempt not my rage,
Oh reservation vile ! the bower, the bower.

Ore. I will not be suspected, my true heart
Derides your imputation. On this theme
Disdain and anger hold me ever dumb.

Olm. Go thou, light woman, go.

Ore. Oh my swoln bosom.
No more of love ; assist me female pride,
And I will sting this tyrant to the soul. (*aside*)
You mention, sir, the bower.

Olm. Ay, I did hint it.

Ore. Of that you would be satisfied.

Olm. I will be

Ore. Well, well, you may hereafter, twas no fault,
At least, in me, if an adventurous youth
Should leap your garden wall.

Olm. She mocks my passion.

Ore. Gallant and gay, a soft Adonis moves,
Breathing perfume, his hair divinely flowing ;
Beauty and youth, to woman's partial eye,
Have charms that strangely interest—my lord,
You droop.

Olm. I do indeed. (*aside*)

Ore. Capricious man,

There is no pleasing you ; when I was silent,
Then you were angry. Shall I now be free ?

Olm. Free as your own free thoughts.

Ore. He feels the scourge.

By your good leave, my lord ; (*offers to go*)

Olm. By yours, sweet lady,

You quit not this apartment, rest you here ;
The law shall do me right, mean time reflect
A husband's wrath is sometimes dangerous. [*exit*

Ore. Only to her who's conscious she deserves it.
This treatment is beyond a woman's patience.
I must retort my wrongs or sink beneath them.

[*exit into the inner chamber*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I—the street.

enter LEANDRO, SEBASTIAN, and GASPAR.

Seb Such is the lady's case.

Leand. I heard not of it,

'Tis news to me

Gas This is Olmedo's house,
And here the countess in confinement rests :
Twere charity to help to set her free.

Leand. Was that the butt end of your raillery ?
I had chose proper lodgings. Well believe me,
It was all lost—should I be tempted now—
I am no stoic—females in distress
Are the true objects of knight errantry.
Our house adjoins and the partition's thin ;
Last night I heard strange voices, sighs, and moan-
ing ;

I'll search the tapestry, fortune may befriend us,
And the coop'd pigeon use her wings again,

Seb. Pr'ythee, be wise, Leandro.

Leand. Very wise ;
I'll give you proof on't—that is, I'll forget
What you have told me—and Olmedo's wife
Must with her spouse accord without my aid.
I have another scheme, you must be secret :
There is a most sweet creature. she has taken
From every country of the earth, the best
Of those perfections which the climate yields.

Gas. Ay, no doubt she's a wonder.

Leand. And so kept,
As if the world deserved not to behold
So rare an excellence.

Seb. Who is the owner
Of such a gem ?

Leand. A knave on record.
Old Bartolo the advocate, her uncle,
Whose wardship guards both her and her estates.

Gas. I know him well, the rogue once cheated
me :

He's rich and covetous beyond expression ;
So watchful too, that would you parallel
Old Argus to him, you must multiply
His eyes a hundred times ; of these none sleep ;
He that would charm the heaviest lid, must hire
A better Mercury than Jove made use of.
Even give it o'er, it will be labor lost.
Leandro, are you rapt ?

Leand. Yes, I must win her ;
And my prophetic love tells me I shall.

Seb. But how ?

Leand. I have strange irons on the anvil,
The lawyer knows me not, I'll go disguised
Like a young clerk to learn his boasted science.

Gas. What access can this get ?

Leand. Leave that to me.

Seb. Well, but methinks, a young and gay gallant,
That would discreetly catch the beams of beauty,
Should like himself appear.

Leand. This is my voyage.
When you love, launch it out in silks and velvets,

I'll love in serge, and will outgo your sattins.
 There is a priest hard by, whose name is Lopez,
 You are ne'er the nearer now.

Gas. We do allow it.

Leand. He is confessor to this sheet of parchment,
 Of grave authority; I've learn'd his nature,
 And make no doubt I shall hit handsomely.

enter SANCHO.

Well Sancho, what's the answer?

San. Sir, the curate

Will be at liesure in the afternoon.

Leand. 'Tis well. [*exit Sancho*] And there I make
 my first attack.

Adieu—I've letters to prepare within.

Gas. Even take your fortune: if you come off
 well,

We'll praise your wit: if not, expect our laughter.

[*exeunt Sebastian and Gaspar*]

Leand. I'll win the diamond from the rock and wear
 her. [*exit into the house*]

SCENE II—the countess's apartment.

ORELIA *enters.*

Ore. My task of reading done, I'll take my lute
 And strive with idle change of occupation
 To lull my sufferings and beguile the time.

(*she takes a lute and sings*)

SONG.

Come gentle lyre, to soothe my grief
 Each wonted art thy mistress tries;
 Thy silvery chords shall bring relief,
 Responsive trembling to my sighs."

LEANDRO *behind the wainscot* responses the cadence.

"bring relief,
 Responsive trembling to my sighs:

Ore. This is enchantment sure, and this the spirit
That comes to set me free ; I'll try once more.
(sings)

With thee a sympathetic friend,
Oft has it been my fond employ ;
In happier times my hours to spend,
Exalting every note of joy.

(*Leandro again responds*)

Exalting every note of joy.

Ore. What can this mean ? tis a man's voice I
think ;
Mere mortal man's : there's a strange flutter here ;
What can be his design ? the wish of freedom
Is nature's instinct ; I may sure indulge it
Without a wound to virtue.

Leand. Lady—hist. (*he knocks*)

Ore. He speaks ; I know not if I dare to answer.

Leand. Hist, lady—hist. (*he knocks again*)

Ore. Who are you ?

Leand. On my faith,

A gentleman.

Ore. What would you, sir, with me ?

Leand. I pity your distress ; I know your story.
Speak, and I'll find the means to set you free.

Ore. The offer's very tempting, he must know
then

That I'm a prisoner, and of course unable
To counteract his rashness : to encourage
Is indiscreet, yet to refuse is hard.

Leand. Here is a door conceal'd behind the tap-
estry,

Tis slightly fastened ; with a chisel's aid,
In two short minutes liberty is yours

Ore. Scarce I dare think or breathe : who can he
be ?

I hope he'll take my silence for consent.

(*Leandro knocks if as unfastening the door*)

But should Olmedo come ! ev'n let him come :
My honor shall sustain me.

(*Leandro continues knocking*)

Freedom's near :

Ay beat again, my heart with throbs replies ;
Tumultuous moment, it o'ercomes my feelings.

(*she sinks into a chair*)

LEANDRO, *having broken open the door, enters.*

Leand. Here's day light ! blessings on my carpentry ;

Lady forgive this rudeness : ha ! no answer.
Has she withdrawn ? a chamber well provided.
Rich arras, furniture of silk and gold.
A shrine fit for a goddess to inhabit,
And see the fair divinity within it,
Thus at your feet I pay my adoration.

(*he kneels, takes her hand and kisses it—she recovers*)

Ore. (*starting*) Who are you, sir ?

Leand. Your humble servant, lady ?

Ore. Why are you here ?

Leand. I'm at your sole disposal :

Truly a docile pupil, do not frown ;
Like frost in May, it nips the budding flowers
In hope's delicious garden ; turn not from me.
By heaven there's more enjoyment from a glance
Of those love darting eyes, than wealth can buy,
Though either India's treasure swell'd the purchase.

Ore. Imprudent woman. (*aside*) I beseech you,
sir ;

My folly's well repaid.

Leand. Let not a banquet

Untasted pass : look on me, take compassion ;
My youth, your beauty ; time and place conspire,
And gentle cupids fan their amorous wings
On the auspicious moment.

Ore. Leave me, sir.

Leand. Think on your wrongs and how you may
revenge them,

Else you are no true woman.

Ore. You behold me,

A most wrong'd woman, by my husband wrong'd,
Wrong'd in the tenderest fibre of my heart,
With undeserved unkindness deeply stung ;
And though still smarting with the wound and insult,
Still glowing with my sex's warm resentment ;
Amidst the rage and tempest of my passion
I yet can hear a monitor that tells me,
She's the true woman who forgives her wrongs,
And trusts in conscious virtue for reward.

Leand. Your reason, like your beauty, is most perfect,

But what has argument to do with love ?
Why came I hither ? cruelly you spurn me,
And with ingratitude betray my hopes.

Ore. Ingratitude ! o ! matchless confidence ;
Begone this instant.

Leand. Hah ! she weeps ; propitious
To all my wishes be this genial shower :
These tears, more precious than Golconda's gems,
Subdue me ; on this hand I press my lips.

Ore. Presumptuous ! quit me, sir : to certain ruin
This conduct leads you : I disdain your folly
And will alarm the servants.

Leand. Softly, madam,
That would be most ungenerous : in your cause
I came and still remain.

Ore. Upbraid me not,
But leave me ; hark ! Olmedo's voice and step.

Leand. This terror is well acted.

Ore. Most undone.

Olm. (*without*) It is sufficient. Pedro, you may leave me.

Leand. Faith, 'tis he indeed ; tis time to fly.

[He retreats through the private door

enter OLME DO.

Olm. Methought as I approach'd the chamber door,
I heard you speaking.

Ore. Is it sir, a wonder,
If long pent up in solitude and silence,
A woman's tongue should seek relief in talking
Though to no other hearers than herself?

Olm. I came not now to parley, but forewarn.
This is a letter from your brother, countess ;
He writes that soon he means to be in Seville.

Ore. I shall rejoice to see him.

Olm. Still obdurate :
Since hate and obstinacy cloud your brow,
Remonstrance would be vain ; farewell Orelia. [exit

Ore. I see the brink of the steep precipice,
And shudder at the danger I escaped.

LEANDRO returns.

Leand. This interval has given me time to think,
I own my folly and request your pardon.
To prove that my repentance is sincere
Impose what task you please, I'll shrink not from it ;
Bid me to fly beyond the antipodes ;
Or add to Hercules another labor,
I'm pledged to the performance.

Ore. Nobly offer'd.
Such generous conduct must be doubly thank'd ;
—You hear my brother is expected back,
Octavio Gonsalez.

Leand. My worthiest friend,
And fellow soldier too.

Ore. Pray seek him out ;
And lest his ear should be abused by slander,
Relate the story of his sister's wrongs :
This ring shall be the witness of your truth.
Such confidence to one unknown !

(*giving him a ring*)

Leand. I read you :
It will not be misplaced. A soldier's honor
Is your security ; Leandro Morla.
A business next my heart draws me to Seville,
I blush to say your beauty near betray'd it ;
Let not your delicacy be alarm'd ;

From yon apartments I shall long be absent,
Esteem them as your own ; when next you see me,
Expect me a deliverer.

Ore. All good fortune

Attend your steps ; my thanks and wishes follow.

[exit Leandro at the secret door]

Strange circumstance ! Olmedo though my heart
Will wrong thee not, yet I may much perplex thee.

[exit into the inner apartment]

SCENE III—*the street.*

enter LOPEZ and DIEGO.

Lop. Poor stirring for poor curates.

Die. And poor sextons.

Lop. We pray, and pray, and pray, but to no purpose ;

Those that enjoy our lands choke our devotions ;
Our narrow stipends make us arrant dunces.

Die. If you live miserably how shall we do, master ?
We rise and ring the bells to get good stomachs,
And oft are fain to eat the ropes for breakfast.

Lop. When was a christening Diego ?

Die. Not these ten weeks ;

The wars, the seas, and the hard times undo us.
The people too are grown so cruel hearted,
They will not die ; there's nothing got by burials.

Lop. Diego the air's too pure.

Die. A good stout plague now ;
Or half a dozen of new-fangled fevers
That would turn up men's heels by wholesale, master,
And take the doctors too in their grave counsels,
Would make my bells go merrily.

Lop. Peace, Diego,
The doctors are our friends, let's please them well :
For though they kill but slow, they're certain, Diego ;
Wait for a tertian ague in the spring,
Then wills and funeral sermons come in season
And feasts that make us frolic.

Die. Would I could see them.

enter LEANDRO from the house, in a mean dress.

Leand. My eyes deceive me, or here sits the game.
A precious pair of youths, I must make towards them.

(apart)
Lop. Who's that? it seems as he would speak
to us.

I hope a marriage, or some will to make. *(to Diego)*

Die. My friend your business.

Leand. 'Tis to that grave gentleman.
Bless your good learning, sir.

Lop. And bless you also.

He has a promising face, there's some hope toward.

(apart to Diego)

Leand. I have a letter to your worship,

Lop. Well sir I pray you whence?

Leand. It is from Mexico,
And from an ancient friend of yours.

Lop. 'Tis well, sir;

'Tis very well. The devil a one I know there.

Die. Take heed, he has a cozening countenance,
I do not like his way.

Lop. "*Cantabit vacuus.*"

He that has nothing, can lose nothing, Diego;

All I can lose good Diego is my learning.

He that gets that may put it in a nut shell.

(apart to Diego)

But to the letter, dated Mexico. *(he reads)*

"SIGNIOR LOPEZ,

"Since my arrival from Seville to these distant parts,
"I have at several intervals written to you divers let-
"ters, but as yet have received no answer." *(good*
"*and very good)* "And although so great a forget-
"fulness on your part might have caused a cessation
"of my correspondence, yet the desire I have to re-
"new our ancient friendship still prevails." *(better and*
"*better, the devil a man know I yet)* "I therefore on
"the present occasion, recommend my son, Leandro,
"the bearer, to your care; with his studies he will

“make you acquainted ; your kindness now shall supply former deficiencies, and so heaven keep you.”

Yours,

ALONZO TIVERIA.”

Lop. Alonzo Tiveria ; very well :

A very ancient friend of mine I take it ;

For till this hour I never heard his name. (*aside*)

Leand. You look, sir, as if you'd forgot my father.

Lop. Nay, whom I never knew, I can't forget, sir ; Alonzo Tiveria ?

Leand. Sir, the same ;

And now in Mexico.

Lop. He may be any where,
For aught that I consider.

Leand. Think again, sir ;
You studied at one time in Salamanca.
And were I understand sworn brothers.

Lop. Ha !

Leand. Nay, sure you must remember.

Lop. Would I could, sir.

Dost thou remember Diego this same signior ?
Thou hast been mine these thirty years.

Die. Remember ?

This man will make you mad, from Mexico,
And signior Tiveria, what is this ?

Next we shall hear of kinsmen in Japan ;
Take heed your worship : pray young gentleman,
Have you for me a letter ?

Leand. Not any letter,
But I was charged to do my father's love
To the old honest sexton Diego ; are you he, sir ?

Die. Have I friends too and know them not ? my
name

Is Diego truly ; but, sir, I have no knowledge
Of Mexico, nor you, nor yet your father ;
Nor any kindred that you have : for heaven's sake
Let's cast about a little and consider ;
We may but dream.

Leand. It seems I am deceived ;
Yet that you are don Lopez, you confess,

The curate here, and have been so some time ;
And you the sexton Diego ; such I'm sent to :
The letter tells as much ; may be they are dead
And you of the like names succeed ; I thank you :
You have done honestly in telling truth,
I might have been too forward ; to that Lopez,
Who was my father's friend, I had a charge,
A charge of money to deliver, gentlemen ;
Five hundred ducats, a poor small gratuity,
But since you are not he—

Lop. Pray let me think—

Good sir, be patient, pray you stay a little,
Let me remember, I beseech you stay, sir.

Die. An honest noble friend that sends so lovingly.
An old friend too, I shall remember sure, sir.

Lop. Thou say'st true, Diego.

Die. Pray consider quickly,
Do, do by any means, methinks already
A grave staid gentleman comes o'er my memory.

Leand. He's old, indeed, sir.

Die. With a goodly white beard ;
Signior Alonzo, master.

Lop. I begin to have him.

Die. He has been from hence about some twenty
years.

Leand. Some five and twenty, sir.

Die. You say most true,
Just to an hour, tis now just five and twenty ;
A fine straight timbered man, and a brave soldier.
He married. let me see,

Leand. De Castro's daughter.

Die. The very same.

Leand. Thou art a very rascal !
This money rubs them into strange remembrances,
For ten more ducats they'd remember Adam. (*aside*)

Lop. Give me your hand, you are welcome to your
country ;

Now I remember plainly, manifestly,
As freshly as if yesterday I'd seen him.
Most heartily welcome, sinful that I am,

Most sinful man, that so I should forget
This loving old companion ; we'd but one soul, sir,
He dwelt here hard by at a handsome—

Leand. Farm. sir,
You say most true.

Lop. Alonzo Tiveria!

Lord, lord, that time should play the treacherous knave
thus.

He was the only friend I had in Spain, sir.
I knew your mother too, a handsome lady,
She married very young, I married them.
I do remember now the masks and sports then,
The fire works and the fine delights, good faith,
Now I look in your face, whose eyes are those?
Nay, if he be not just Alonzo's picture.

Leand. Their impudence quite puts me to the blush.
(*aside*)

Die. Young gentleman, I think your name's Leandro.

Leand. It is so—thank the letter for thy knowledge.
(*aside*)

Die. I have dandled you, and kiss'd you, and play'd
with you,

A hundred and a hundred times ; and danced you,
And swung you in my bell ropes.

Lop. A sweet boy.

Leand. Sweet lying knaves, what would they do
for thousands? (*aside*)

Lop. A wondrous sweet boy then it was ; see now,
Time that consumes us, shoots him up still sweeter.
How does the noble gentleman your father ?
When shall we see him ? when will he bless his country ?

Leand. O very shortly, sir ; till his return
He has sent me over to your charge.

Lop. And welcome ;
Nay you shall know you are welcome to your friend,
sir.

Leand. And for my study which must be the law,
To farther which he would entreat your care

To plant me in the favor of some man
Expert in knowledge ; for his pains and trouble
I've further monies ready.

Lop. Once more welcome,
The law you've hit upon most happily ;
There is a master in that science, Bartolo,
A neighbor by, to whom I will prefer you ;
I'll do you faithful service.

Die. Tis an ass,
And so we'll use him, (*aside*) he shall be a lawyer.

Leand. Pray you unlade me, sir. (*gives a purse*)

Lop. I will refresh you ;

If you should want, you'll know, sir, your exchequer.

Leand. If all this gains me but access I'm happy.

Die. I see which way the wind blows—let us walk.

Leand. To have the fort betray'd these fools must
fleece me. (*aside*) [exunt

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I—*a room in BARTOLO'S house.*

enter AMARANTA and PHŒBE.

Phæbe. But by what chance, dear mistress, did your
lover

Declare his passion ? long coop'd closely up,
How could he see you. how converse, how win you ?
Whence rose your first acquaintance ?

Amar. Some months since,
When my old guardian took me to his farm
Near Palma, to enjoy the country air,
As I look'd from the lattice one fine evening,
A gallant cavalier came riding by :
He seeing me, look'd up and bow'd ; I courtesied,
Lest he should think I had no breeding, girl ;
He bow'd again ; what could I do but courtesy ?

I would not be thought rude.

Phæbe. No, certainly,
That would have been as cruel as ill-bred ;
I should have done the same. What followed this ?

Amar. Some interviews ; at length, his art contrived,
In spite of all my uncle's jealous care :
For difficulties sharpen lovers' wits :
But now tis near a fortnight ; two long weeks,
And no device, no serenade, no letter ;
Evil I much forebode.

Phæbe. Removed to Seville,
Thus closely watch'd, old Bartolo, perhaps,
May have found out the secret ; tell me truly,
Are you resolved to disappoint his wishes ?
Carlos his son, who is your promised husband,
Is now expected home ; which will you choose ?

Amar. O tis a dainty spark ; I hate him, *Phæbe*,
I always hated him ; a double hatred,
Both for his father's faults and for his own :
Do they not keep me like a prisoner here
To marry me, whether I would or no ?
My fortune is their object. One thing, *Phæbe*,
Had I a friend.

Phæbe. Signora, I'm your friend.
I've been in love myself, and pity all
Whom little Cupid wounds.

Amar. Alas ! what's pity,
Unless assistance aids it ?

Phæbe. Trust me, mistress,
And if I fail you, say no faith's in woman.

Amar. Alas ! all schemes are vain, unless we find
Some opportunity to leave the house.
My guardian watches o'er me night and day ;
Nay, I o'erheard him muttering to himself,
That till his son arrived, for fear of mischief,
He would not stir abroad.

Phæbe. Let's try the battle ;
A young girl's wishes to an old man's wit :
But hush, I hear the study door ! he comes.

(they retire to the back of the stage)

enter BARTOLO.

Bart. I have done wonders, mighty things to day ;
My heart rejoices at my wealthy gleanings.
O tis a blessed thing to have rich clients !
Why child, why Amaranta, well my darling ;
I have the golden birds and all for you
Hereafter. What hast thou been doing, sweet one ?

Amar. Little or nothing. Looking from the window

To see the free birds wanton in the air,
And wish to be among them.

Bart. Well, next week
Comes home a mate to pair with thee my robin ;
Then you may fly where pleasure shall invite you.

Amar. You put a string round your poor captive's leg,
And call it liberty ; whereto serves virtue
That is not tried ? I fain would go abroad,
Like others of my sex and station, guardian,
And have companions proper for my age.

Bart. And so you shall ; but a retired still life
Becomes young women best ; next week I yield you ;
You shall have every thing, your coach and people,
Set off most handsomely, an envied bride.
Till then, good thoughts will be the best companions
And my discourse the sweetest entertainment.

Amar. I dare not contradict ; but, dear papa,
For so I am to call you, let me walk
With Phœbe for some wholesome exercise ;
I feel so dizzy.

Bart. Dizzy ? to your chamber ;
No walking, tis not walking weather ; dizzy !
O you may chance to fall.

enter PEREZ.

What would you have ?

Per. The reverend Lopez, with a stranger, waits
To see your worship.

Bart. Ha ! a stranger.

Per. Yes, sir.

Bart. Perhaps some client which the curate brings me ;

Some client worth the fleecing ; go in, chuck,
No walking out to-day ; I'll but speak to them,
And presently return.

Amar. I must obey ;

To-day is yours, to-morrow may be mine. (*aside*)

[*exeunt Amaranta and Phæbe, Bartolo locks the door after them*]

Bart. So, so, fast bind, fast find : no walking out ;
My loving neighbors, pray come in, you're welcome.

enter LOPEZ, DIEGO, and LEANDRO.

Lop. Bless your good reverence.

Bart. Good day, master curate ;

And neighbor Diego welcome ; what's your business ?
And pray be short, good friends, the time is precious ;

Welcome too, sir. (*to Leandro*)

Lop. Then to be short, your worship,

We have brought you this young man of honest parents,

And of an honest face.

Bart. It seems so, neighbors ;

But to what end ?

Lop. To be your pupil, sir,

Your servant if you please.

Die. He has travell'd far, sir,

To seek a worthy man.

Bart. Alas ! good friends,

I am a poor man, and unfit to keep

A servant of his reckoning ; besides,

My house is but a cottage, scarcely able

To hold myself and those poor few who live in't ;

Moreover, in these times, you must excuse me

If I'm a little scrupulous in my dealings.

Lop. Pray let me answer that ; three hundred
ducats

Will be security for his good credit,

Three hundred ducats.

Bart. Ha ! three hundred ducats ?

Lop. All in good gold.

Bart. That's sure an honest pledge.

Lop. And yet he needs it not, his face and carriage

Both testify an inbred honesty.

Die. An honest young man ne'er served your worship ;

But he's bashful.

Bart. That, sir, will wear off ;

If not, lay not the blame to his profession.

Leand. I always had a ripe mind to the law, sir :

If I am not intruding to your worship,

The least poor corner of your house, a bed,

And some books to instruct me, with your counsel,
Would well content me.

Lop. Note his mind to learning.

Bart. I do, and like it well ; thanks to his money.

Lop. A wondrous modest youth, sir.

Bart. So it seems ;

His love to study must be nourish'd, Lopez.

Lop. His parents when they know your care, will
note it

With huge rewards ; they are rich and bountiful.

Bart. Come hither.

Leand. Yes, your worship.

Bart. You would learn

The niceties of law ?

Leand. I would indeed, sir.

Bart. Say, should I undertake to teach you, sir,

Which would occasion to me no small trouble,

Considering my affairs and narrow dwelling,

Could you content yourself at first, thus meanly

To lie hard, in an out-part of my house

Live hard, and study hard ?

Leand. I'll not complain, sir.

Bart. A scholar should be frugal ; scanty meals

Make the brain fruitful.

Leand. Any thing, an't please you,

That's fresh and wholesome.

Bart. Then, I think I'll take you ;
Study should be remote from company ;
You must agree to keep within your confines.

Leand. I will obey you ever.

Lop. There's the gold ;
Twill multiply if he increase in knowledge.
Show him his cell, tis a well govern'd youth ;
His name Leandro, give him books in plenty.
Take a good heart and study hard.

Leand. I will, sir.

Bart. Come, sir, with me.

[*Bartolo takes Leandro to a door*]

Lop Diego, the gudgeon bites.

Die. Ay, swallows bait and hook ; a precious law-
yer.

Lop. Here's money got with ease ; there, spend
that jovially,
And pray for the fool the founder.

Die. Many fools
I heartily pray may follow his example ;
May there be many such sweet friends from Mexico.

Lop. Come from what quarter of the world, I care
not ;
They cannot come amiss that bring me gold.

re-enter BARTOLO.

Bart. Neighbors, I thank you for your diligence
And loving care.

Lop We'll come and see his progress,
And crack a case with him sometimes ; good day,
Most worthy sir.

Die. Good day, your worship.

Bart. Signiors [exeunt Lopez and Diego
Good day ; three hundred ducats ; a rich earnest
Of what's to follow ; I will carefully secure them.
[exit

LEANDRO peeps.

Leand. Now if I could but see her, not this way ;

How filthy is this dungeon call'd my chamber ;
If I continue long twill choke me up.

A door ! now love and fortune once befriend me,
And bless me with the sight of Amaranta ;

Tis she. (*he opens the door, and brings in Amaranta*)
Amar. Leandro !

Leand. Hush ! your guardian's servant ;
See to what stratagems I am reduced.

Amar. You take me by surprize.

Leand. But smile upon me ;
No longer chide my honorable suit.

Amar. I should deny you, did not danger threaten.

Leand. What danger ?

Amar. In three days your rival, Carlos,
Will claim me for his bride.

Leand. Distracting news !

Amar. Till then my guardian will not quit the
house ;

Devise a remedy, but leave me now.

Leand. You promise to be mine.

Amar. Retire, I pray you.

Leand. Give me some token.

Amar. Hark ! a noise—there—go.

Leand. (*kissing her hand*) Dear pledge.

Amar. More noise, pray leave me ; we must part.

Leand. Tis Bartolo—now softly to my kennel.

[*he shuts the door after her and retires*

enter BARTOLO.

Bart. All's safe ; I love to look upon my treasure ;
Let people mock and gibe ; a well fill'd coffer
Consoles me for such trifles.

PEREZ announces count OLMEDO entering.

Per. Count Olmedo.

[*exit*

Bart. Welcome, my lord ; welcome to my poor
dwelling.

Olm. Good signior Bartolo, you know my cause.

Bart. I do sufficiently.

Olm. My soul is rack'd,

My honor tarnished : this perfidious woman
Refuses explanation ; a divorce
Alone can right me in the world's esteem
And in my own though it should break my heart,
Impair my honesty, impeach my credit,
Yet as no other means are left to save me,
I must and will go forward.

Bart. Do, my lord.

And look not after credit ; we shall save that ;
We surgeons of the law do desperate cures, sir ;
You give good fees, and those beget good causes.

Olm. Money you shall not want.

Bart. No, no, we must not ;

Only line well your cause : we must have witnesses
Enough and ready : good substantial souls,
That will swear roundly.

Olm. They shall swear the truth.

Bart. That's no great matter ; for variety
They may swear truth, else tis not much look'd after ;
I have a draft of the whole process, ready,
Now in my study ; by your leave, my lord,
I will go fetch it. [exit

Olm. There's no other way ;

My heart is wrung ; but manhood, honor, fame,
Demand the sacrifice that's due to justice.

enter LEANDRO.

Leand. These papers to your lordship, signior Bartolo

Commends ; intent upon a point of law,
He prays your favor for a few short minutes.

Olm. A very goodly youth.

Leand. Please you, peruse them.

Olm. I thank you, sir.

(as Leandro presents the writings, Olmedo discovers the ring on his finger)
Impossible—it kills me.

Leand. Are you not well, my lord ?

Olm. Your hand, young man.

(he catches it with great earnestness)

Leand. O my forgetfulness.

Olm. A sudden shock :

Infirmity, like summer clouds, o'ertakes me.
Tis over now ; you have a pretty ring there :
It much reminds me of an ancient friend :
'Tis Pallas graved on onyx ; give me leave
To take it from your finger.

Leand. A mere trifle,
Left by my grandmother.

Olm. Pray let me look on't.

Leand. It will not yield, so long it has been worn,
That now tis loth to part.

Olm. I have a reason :
A most strong reason : tis the same, by heaven !
And he refuses. (*aside*) Sir, our family
Had once possession of an antique gem,
So similar, excuse me—that I think
Were I upon the proof by solemn oath !
I shall go mad—is this at length the clue ? (*aside*)
I say upon my oath—

enter BARTOLO.

Bart. I say so too ;
Our cause is clear as day-light : precedent
And grave authority are on our side ;
My lord, we must succeed ; go, go, Leandro ;
Anon I'll call you. [*exit Leandro*]

Olm. I must see that ring.

Bart. See what, my lord ?

Olm. Octavio's valued token,
Given to my wife upon our wedding-day ;
And she, o monstrous ! yields it as the pledge
Of my confirm'd dishonor ; I will have it,
Though by the rack I should extort my shame. [*exit*]

Bart. Why, count, my lord ! good lack ! the man
is mad ;
'Tis a litigious fool ; I love such clients ;
Why runs he to my study ? all my papers
In such nice order too : if he disturb them
I will have double fees, and that's my comfort.

re-enter OLMEDO.

Olm. He has escaped me, tis too palpable ;
Who is that youth ?

Bart. A very honest lad.

Olm. Ha ! are you sure of that ? yet stay, I would
not

Insinuate a man's good name away
On bare suspicion (*aside*) Bartolo, a fit
Of sudden curiosity—no more.

Bart. His brain's disturb'd I think.

Olm. On with your cause ;
No, I would not accuse too hastily ;
Tis possible a duplicate exists :
Yet hardly so ; tis wrought with wondrous art ;
I will demand this token of my wife ;
If she produce not the authentic gem,
I am confirm'd beyond all touch of doubt :
“ Did she not practise on my jealous mood
“ By the description of a youth like this ?
“ O art ! o subtlety profound in woman !
“ Confessing truth, yet in the guise of falsehood.”
Young paramour beware ; the lightning breaks,
Discovering through the gloom some horrid shade,
And vengeance, like the thunder, waits to follow.

(*aside*)

Bart. My lord, my lord—

Olm. Well, Bartolo, the matter.

Bart. Did not your lordship, in this angry trim,
O'erturn some pile of papers in my study ?
Twill take much precious time to set them right,
Much care and labor.

Olm. This, sir, will replace it ; (*giving a purse*)
Proceed with diligence ; proofs rise on proofs ;
Gain but my cause, and choose your own reward.

[*exit*

Bart. Thou jealous-pated fool, e'en go thy ways.
I will improve the profit—blessings on thee,
- (*chinking the purse*)

Thou dose medicinal for every ill ;
I would such accidents chanced every day.

[exit

SCENE II—the street.

enter SEBASTIAN and GASPAR.*Seb.* Can any thing but wonder—*Gas.* Wonder on ;

I find Leandro has obtained admittance :
Success I wish him ; surely he deserves it ;
He is a royal fellow, yet maintains
A mean in all his courses ; careful too
On whom to shower his bounties ; he who gives
To all alike may do a good by chance,
But never out of judgment.

Seb. Spare your praises,
Unless you mean to speak them to his face ;
Running he comes this way, and out of breath,
In chase of his first fee ; Leandro, welcome ;

enter LEANDRO.

Thou lookst most sillily.

Gas. Like a young clerk,
A puppy that would write for half a rial ;
This is a commanding shape to win a beauty !

Leand. A truce to your remarks : I'm in great
haste.

Gas. To do the lawyer's errand.

Leand. And my own.

Seb. How speeds your suit ? is Amaranta kind ?

Leand. Good fellows, and dear friends, you must
assist me ;

For Bartolo has sworn to keep the house ;
Some plan you must contrive to draw him thence,
His vulnerable side with golden prongs
I've probed already : coin some rare invention ;
I'll realize it at whatever cost.
Seek Lopez ; he has a prevailing wit.
Adieu. I must away ; a lady's fate

Hangs on my expedition.

Gas. Stay ; Octavio

Is just arrived.

Leand. I'll see him speedily.

Farewell : remember, show yourselves my friends.

[exit into the house]

Gas. The project shall not languish. To the curate ;

And lest he stand upon his honesty,

We must alarm him with the threat of justice.

Seb. Fear not the conscience of this ghostly man,
It can digest the heaviest substance ; gold.

A very ostrich stomach.

Gas. See, he comes.

How pleased he looks ; sure he has bought some prebend,

Some wealthy benefice of little labor.

His eye hath caught us. *(they retire)*

enter LOPEZ and DIEGO.

Lop. Diego, who are these ?

Die. I know not. Do they seek the grand elixir,
Or bring they dross, for you to turn to gold ?

Lop. Another don Alonzo, now.

Die. Ay, marry,

Or any one that sends you so much money
Let him be who he will.

Lop. Would ye with me, sirs ?

Gas. We have some business with you.

Lop. Have you letters,

Or any kind remembrances !

Seb. Remembrances !

Lop. From Mexico, or other parts remote.

You look like travell'd men ; from some old friend

That haply I forgot ; some loving signiors

In China or Japan ; some dear companion

Now with the great mogul ?

Gas. We will inform you.

Lop. Or came ye from Peru ? look they not, Diego,
As if they had some mystery about them ?

Would ye be private ?

Gas. There's no need on't, sir.

We bring you a remembrance from a merchant.

Lop. Tis very well ; belike I know him.

Seb. No, sir ;

I do not think you do.

Lop. A new mistake ;

Let's carry it decently. (*aside*)

Gas. We came to tell you,

That you've received large sums from a young factor

They call Leandro, who has robb'd his master :

Robb'd him, and run away, sir.

Die. This is news

That comes from a cold country.

Lop. Yes, it freezes.

Gas. Is not this true ? now, curate, do you shrink ?
Do we not touch you ?

Lop. I beseech you, sir,

We have a hundred ducats left.

Seb. You'll hang both.

Lop. One may suffice.

Die. I'll not hang alone :

I had the least part, you shall hang the highest.

Plague of this Tiveria and the letter ;

The devil sent it post to pepper us.

Gas. If you are penitent, we'll have compassion.

Lop. We are poor men, and humble, sir ; command
us.

Gas. You shall have more gold, and not be endan-
ger'd.

Leandro has an honorable suit

To the fair Amaranta.

Lop. Has he so ?

I love him for't.

Gas. But you must show your love,
In lending him your help to gain him means
And opportunity.

Lop. He shall want for nothing.

Gas. The tale I told was but to frighten ye ;
Leandro's truly noble.

Die. Ay, I thought so,
To help him we will handsomely endeavor.

Gas. Old Bartolo with such a jealous care
Secures the maid, that all Leandro's wishes
Are ineffectual. Draw him from the house ;
Tempt him from brooding o'er this tender chick,
And the fond lovers may escape their cage.

Lop. I'm honey'd with the project ; say no more :
I know my advocate to a hair ; and what
Will draw him from his prayers, if he use any.
I owe him an old grudge ; I'd have him vex'd.

Seb. But you lose time.

Lop. 'Tis working in my brain.
Let us be gone. Diego must bear his part :
A sharp and subtle knave ; give him but hints,
And he will amplify. I'll tell you further
As we walk on.

Seb. Now should Leandro fail—

Gas. I'll give him o'er.

Lop. Tush, tush, he's in the vein :
I'll fetch my lawyer with a vengeance forth,
And you shall have a merry scene to boot. [*exeunt*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE I—*the countesses apartment.*

OLMEDO enters, throws himself into a chair, in great perturbation—ORELIA enters from the inner apartment—as she approaches, she smiles affectionately upon him.

Olm. Yet, what an air of innocence she carries.
O woman, nature who denied thee strength,
With art made ample recompense. Conviction
By means unsought hath brought the treason home.
My eyes have seen the token of my shame.

Ore. Are you not well, Olmedo?

Olm. Well, thou traitress—(to himself)

Ore. Why are you thus disturb'd? 'some sudden illness

Beats through your veins and flushes in your face.

Come, lean upon my bosom, pillow'd here,

Distraction shall be lull'd and anguish sleep.

Olm. What have I lost! what have I lost! o love.

Ore. Where is your pain? forgotten are my wrongs,
I am your wife to sooth your sufferings still.

These tears are witness.

Olm. Tears. Can tears be false?

The tears of crocodiles, my damning proof

Would silence incredulity itself.

Softly—with art I must encounter art: (*aside*)

Your hand, Orelia: weep no more—I'm well.

(*taking her hand*)

Methinks I miss a ring from off your finger.

Ore. Fatal imprudence! twill confirm his doubts.

Olm. The other hand—this finger—this and this.

O vacancy, the seal of dread assurance!

—Produce the ring.

Ore. What ring? the ruby, love,

Or that of emerald with diamonds set,

Or pearl, remembrance of young Florio's death;

Transient memorial, what if it be lost,

Our hearts retain his value.

Olm. O refined

Dissimulation. (*aside*) Not the ruby, love,

Nor that of emerald with diamonds set,

Nor pearl, remembrance of young Florio's death.

Ore. Which is it then?

Olm. The onyx, carved by art

With such rare excellence, a ransack'd province

Could not supply its equal—find me that,

Or by the saints such imputation rests

Upon thy fame, as ages cannot cure.

Ore. Perchance some villain hath purloin'd the treasure,

And thence you take occasion to upbraid me.

What vision moves you thus?

Olm. This very morning,
Upon the finger of a dainty minion,
Trimm'd at all points, the full-flush'd rose of youth
Glow'd in his cheeks; I mark'd his wanton air;
I say upon the hand of this Narcissus
Did I behold your ring.

Ore. O monstrous, ha! ha! ha!
Husband you rave.

Olm. Laugh on; that merry note
May soon be changed to sadness: mark me, wife;
If you produce not on the spot that ring,
Renounce the name of modesty. We part
Never to meet again.

Ore. Can this be serious?

Olm. Search through your cabinet, unlock each
drawer
Where chance or carelessness might drop the jewel,
Search with a lynx's eye.

(Orelia pretends to look about)

Ore. I cannot find it.
Why thus attach importance to a trifle?
Is it to try my patience?

Olm. 'Tis to try thee.
This crisis of thy fate—produce the ring,
(Leandro appears at the private door)
And here I promise to renounce all doubts,
All fears, all jealousies, confess myself
The veriest slave that e'er suspicion haunted.

Ore. I'm an unhappy woman.
*(Olmedo having sunk into his chair, Orelia
perceives Leandro, who restores the ring)*

Olm. Freedom's thine,
Rule and dominion; take whatever pleasure
Thy heart may prompt; command whate'er thou wilt,
Obsequious I'll obey: my love, my wealth
I offer at thy feet; produce the ring,
That is the sole condition.

Ore. You'll retract.

Olm. No, on my life; I know too well my ground.

Ore. How frail is memory, how could I forget
My purse contain'd the bauble. Look you, sir,
Is this the ring or no?

*(she takes the ring from her purse and puts it
on her finger)*

Olm. Nay, yes, tis magic.
Let me examine; tis reality;
I feel—I grasp it; by the sight alone
I would not trust; the pleasure's so extreme:
Forgive me, wife, that e'er I could suspect thee,
My gentle mistress, be yourself again:
Enjoy the world that you were born to grace.

Ore. I thank your courtesy, but hear me, count;
My turn is now to chide—and thank Leandro
I have abundant scope. *(aside)* You have immured
me,

Exposed me to the censure of rude tongues.

Olm. I own twas most unjust, but duty call'd;
The vigilance of honor urg'd me on,
Deluded and deceived: if e'er you loved me,
Twill be an easy lesson to forgive.

Ore. That's not the question now, my fame's im-
peach'd,
My brother's sanction only sets me free.

Olm. Pardon, forget what's past, and go with me.

Ore. I quit not, sir, this room.

Olm. Come, come, tis over:
On this dear hand I print the ardent pledge
Of happy years to come; will you not go?

Ore. I will not, sir.

Olm. Perverse, you scorn my love?

Ore. My resolution's fix'd.

Olm. Keep to it then;

At once you please and pain, distract and sooth me.

[exit]

Ore. Blest be the chance that brought Leandro back:
Twas a hard struggle not to speak forgiveness,
But since the world was witness to my wrongs,
The reparation must be public too.

[exit into the inner chamber]

SCENE II—a room in BARTOLO's house.

enter BARTOLO, AMARANTA, and PHÆBE.

Bart. Is not this better now, than walking out?
Or gazing till your eyes ake from the window?

Amar. I am well satisfied to keep at home.

Bart. You shall not want amusement—bring the
chess-board;

Let's have a game: I'll try your mastery.

Amar. As learned as you are, sir, I shall beat you.

(*Phæbe brings in a chess-board*)

Bart. Come, set it down, are the men duly placed?
Chess helps to settle a young woman's brain.

Now we play on.

Amar. But I'll have the first move.

Bart. Well, so you shall, and pray you lose no time.

Amar. I do not mean it. (*they play*)

Bart. Sweet, your knight's in danger.

Amar. It's time, I show my skill, and bring him off
then.

Bart. Now for a bold move.

Amar. I have one still bolder

In contemplation, that you little dream of.

(*some one knocks*)

Bart. Who's there? I come; you cannot scape me
now.

Amar. Yes, but I'll try for't, sir.

Bart. Who's there? I say. (*a knock again*)

Play quickly, niece.

Amar. As quickly as I can, sir;

First I must think a little.

Bart. Phæbe—Perez. (*a knock again*)

Where are you? ever absent or asleep.

Leandro.

enter LEANDRO.

—Pr'ythee pupil, at the door

See who it is that wants me: move, my girl.

Leand. What killing looks she steals.

[*exit Leandro*]

Bart. Why child you are lost.

Amar. I am, indeed.

Bart. Come play, ere I am call'd.

Amar. I must have furthe time to look about me.

Bart. What wrangling knaves can want to speak with me ?

enter LEANDRO.

Leand. The worthy curate waits to see your worship,

He'll not come in, but prays you to go to him ;
He's in great haste, it is some urgent business.

Bart. Observe the men, and do not alter them ;
I'll presently come back. [*exit*

Leand. Dear Amaranta,
The time has bless'd us both, love bids us use it ;
Lopez has found the means to set us free.

Amar. Will you not think me light if thus I yield ?

Leand. Necessity acquits you, trust me sweet ;
I bring a whole heart to you, here I give it ;
Upon the burning altar of true love,
On those divine lips—where perpetual spring grows,
I pledge eternal faith.

(*as he salutes her, Amaranta overturns the chess-board*)

enter BARTOLO and LOPEZ.

Bart. What noise was that ?

Leand. Ay, tis all over ;
I am discovered, lost—I shall be hooted at.

Bart. Why do those lie here ?

Amar. Only a chance—your pupil said he play'd well,

And I unwilling to sit long time idle,
Permitted him to undertake your game ;
He so endangered me I thought all lost,
But bringing off my queen. I heard you coming
And rose o' the sudden smilingly to show you ;
My apron caught the chess-board and the men ;
And so the noise was.

Leand. Admirably turn'd ;
My hopes revive.

Bart. Well, well ; again at supper
We'll try another match, go to you chamber.

[*exit Amaranta*]

Lop. Peace be with you daughter, leave us good
Leandro.

[*exit Leandro*]

Bart. Is't possible he should be rich.

Lop. Most possible ;
He has been long, though but by little gettings
Drawing together.

Bart. Reckoned a poor sexton ;
Honest, poor Diego.

Lop. A close fellow, sir ;
Both close and scraping, and that fills the bags.

Bart. A notable good fellow too.

Lop. Sometimes, sir ;
But always with an eye to business.

Bart. So many thousands.

Lop. Heaven knows what.

Bart. Tis strange ;
Tis very strange, we see what by endeavor
And honest labor—

Lop. Milo, by continuance,
Grew from a silly calf, your worship's reverence,
To carry a bull, a penny, then a pound, sir ;
And from one pound to many, tis the progress.

Bart. You say true, but he loved to feed well also ;
And that methinks, sir—

Lop. From another's trencher ;
And where he found it season'd with small charge,
There he would play the tyrant, and devour ye
More than the graves he made ; at home he lived
Like a camelion, suck'd the air of misery,
And grew fat by the brewis of an egg shell ;
Smelling a cook shop would go home and surfeit,
And be a month in fasting out that fever.

Bart. These are good symptoms, does he lie so
sick ?

Lop. O very sick.

Bart. And chosen me executor.

Lop. Only your worship.

Bart. Ha ! no hope of his amendment.

Lop. None that we find.

Bart. Hath he no kinsmen neither ?

Lop. Faith, very few.

Bart. His mind will be the quieter ;
What doctors has he ?

Lop. He believes in none, sir.

Bart. They are but needless things in such extremities ;

Who draws the good man's will ?

Lop. That must I do, sir,
And to my grief.

Bart. Grief will do little now, sir ;
Draw it to your content, and as I counsel :
An honest man—but such men live not always ;
Who are about him ?

Lop. Many, now he's passing ;
Some gentlemen who'd fain be of his kindred,
Rich men can want no heirs, sir.

Bart. They do ill,
Indeed they do, to trouble him ; very ill, sir ;
But we shall take a care—bring me my cloak.
A vow had bound me not to quit the house,
But this extremity absolves my oath ;
Prudence however will secure my treasure.

(locks the door and takes the key)

Now, Lopez, I attend you.

Lop. Benedicite.

[*exeunt*]

enter LEANDRO.

Leand. The priest plays well his part ; yes, there
they go ;
Theology and law ; two neat professors :
They turn the corner of the street together,
And now they vanish ; Amaranta—love :
Ha ! lock'd and fast, ridiculous precaution ;
One blow defeats it.

(he breaks open the door with his foot)

Now or never sweet one,
Kind opportunity invites our fortune. [*exit at the door*]

SCENE III—*a mean apartment in* DIEGO'S house.

enter DIEGO, SEBASTIAN, and GASPAR.

Gas. I wonder Lopez and the lawyer come not ;
When they arrive, play the knave finely, Diego,
And give Leandro time.

Die. I warrant you.

Gas. Here is your chair, your gallipots and phials ;
With all the apparatus of the sick ;
You look not pale enough.

Die. I'll find the craft to cozen that old knave.
Trust me I'll bring your friend in safety through.

Seb. Peace, they are coming.

(*Diego counterfeits the sick man*)

Gas. O good friends, walk in.

enter LOPEZ and BARTOLO.

Lop. Is he no better ? signiors, raise him up ;
Give him fresh air.

Bart. I am sorry neighbor Diego
To find you in so weak a state.

Die. You are welcome ;
But I am fleeting, sir.

Bart. Methinks he looks well.
His color fresh and strong, his eyes are cheerful.

Lop. A glimmering before death, tis nothing else.

Die. My learned sir, pray sit ; I'm bold to send
for you

To take the care of what I leave.

Lop. D'ye note that ?

Die. My worthy neighbors weep not, I must leave
you ;

I cannot always bear you company ;

Pray, master curate write my testament.

Your worship I do make my full executor,

You are a man of wit and understanding.

—Give me a cup of wine to raise my spirits,
For I speak low ; I would before these neighbors
Have you to swear that you'll see executed,
What I shall leave.

Bart. I vow it truly, friends ;
Let not that trouble you : before all these,
Once more I give my oath.

Lop. We are ready for you.

Gas. Now spur the ass, get our friend time.
(*apart to Diego*)

Die. First then—

Lop. Remember your parish, neighbor.

Die. You speak wisely ;

I do remember it, a wanton parish,
And pray it may be mended.

Lop. What d'ye give to 't ?

Die. Set down one thousand ducats.

Bart. A good gift,
And will be long remember'd.

Die. To your worship,
I give two thousand more, it may be three, sir ;
A poor gratuity for your pains taking.

Bart. These are large sums.

Lop. Nothing to him that has them.

Die. Now for yourself good curate, write five
hundred.

Bart. This fellow coins sure.

Die. Give me some more drink ;
To all bell ringers, I bequeath new ropes ;
And let them use them at their own discretion.

Lop. He raves a little.

Bart. Have you more to leave ?

Die. Only to pious uses, sir, a trifle,
I give three hundred crowns to buy a church-yard.

Bart. A what !

Die. A spacious church yard to lay thieves and
knaves in ;

Rich men and honest men take all the room up.

Bart. Tis a mad legacy.

Die. Twas got as madly.

My sheep, my oxen, and my moveables,
My plate, my jewels, and five hundred acres,
I have no heirs.

Bart. This cannot be, tis monstrous.

Die. Three ships at sea too.

Bart. You have made me full executor !

Die. Full—full and total ; would I'd more to give
you :

But this may serve an honest mind.

Bart. You say true,

A very honest mind, and make it rich too ;

Rich, wondrous rich ; but where to raise these mo-
nies ;

About your house I see no such great promise :

Where shall I find these sums ?

Die. Even where you please, sir :

You are wise and provident, and know business ;

Raise them where you think good, I'm reasonable.

Bart. Think good ! will that raise thousands ?

What d'ye make me ?

Die. You have sworn to see it done, that's all my
comfort.

Bart. I am abused, betray'd, laugh'd at, and
scorn'd.

Gas. No : you are fool'd.

Lop. Most handsomely and neatly,
Such cunning masters must be fool'd sometimes, sir.

Seb. And now we hope Leandro reaps the profit.

Bart. My niece—my niece—that villain—that
Leandro :

I'm fool'd indeed—the lawyer is an ass ;

A weak, dull, shallow ass : I do confess it :

I am ashamed to think how flat I'm cheated.

A trick—a damn'd trick : but I will be revenged

Curate, remember curate ; rascal, remember,

Thou notable rich rascal.

Die. Stay a little,

We've two more legacies to close your mouth up.

Gas. Now to congratulate Leandro's fortune.

[*exeunt laughing*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE I—ORELIA'S apartment.

OLMEDO enters.

Olm. She is retired to rest. perverse and sullen :
 I could have sworn the ring I saw was hers ;
 How can I reconcile such contradictions
 Against my sense believing in my sense !
 Her conduct too, so strange and unexpected ;
 A woman that disdains her husband's love
 Gives ample scope for doubt ; I shall relapse—
 O torturing passion, well I must forget :

(he goes to the door of the inner chamber)

Orelia speak to me—are you not well ?
 This silence is unkind ; I came to cheer you :
 How ! what means this ? not here ! Orelia fled !
 A private door ! o horrible conviction !
 Idiot, to trust to locks, or bolts, or chains—
 Woman's contrivance can defeat them all.

[exit at the private door]

after a little time OLMEDO is heard speaking in a loud tone, and enters pulling in the LANDLADY.

Olm. Come forth thou hag, thou accessory witch ;
 And let me see thy face and know thy dealings—
 What dost thou here ? who art thou ? what's thy
 calling ?

Landl. I am a very honest ancient woman,
 Landlady to the house.

Olm. A fine profession !
 What and you entertain young gallants, do you,
 To break through doors into your neighbor's dwell-
 ing ?

Landl. This used to be tis true, a private door,
 But it has many years been fasten'd up.

Olm. I'll have thee rack'd.

Landl. Pity my sex's weakness.

Olm. Deserve my pity—tell me where to find them.

Landl. Alas ! find whom, sir ?

Olm. Thou deceitful jade !

Pretending ignorance ; find whom ? the countess :
Hast thou conceal'd her ? tell me, has she fled ?
Fled with the clerk you harbor'd ?

Landl. Sir, my credit

Stoops not to take such lodgers : clerks indeed !
The inmate of my house was a young officer,
A brave and handsome man, liberal and courteous,
One that kept company with lords and ladies ;
Many there came to see him.

Olm. O no doubt on't ;

A choice seraglio, full of melting beauties.

Landl. Money to him was dirt beneath his feet,
That I will say ; as generous as the sun too ;
And as I said a handsome youth : such eyes !

Olm. Peace, thou eternal boder of ill fate !
Roberto, Pedro—

enter servants.

Seize that prating beldam
And bring her with you ; follow on your lives ;
I will search every corner : if I find thee
To be assistant in these deeds of darkness,
Thou shalt be flay'd alive.

Landl. The signior whom you seek has left the
house :

A lady with him ? there were two, two ladies,
Did they belong to you ? they are gone together
To a mask'd ball at the Fontana d'Oro.

Olm. How : dare the public eye ! invite dishonor ?
Well, they shall find their portion, I will meet them :
Bring her along.

Ped. Proceed fair gentlewoman.

Landl. I'm your servant.

[exeunt with great ceremony at the private door]

SCENE II—the street.

enter BARTOLO with two officers.

Bart. I will have warrants, executions, writs !

Greater and lesser excommunications ;
 The whole law's apparatus shall revenge me :
 Such deep indignity ! affront so monstrous !
 My niece—and all her portion lost completely.

enter LOPEZ and DIEGO.

That knavish priest, and still more knavish sexton :
 At the bare mention of their names I've raised them ;
 Thou Judas where's my niece ? where is Leandro ?
 Come, render up accounts thou wicked Judas.

Lop. Repress your choler, they are not far distant.

enter LEANDRO and AMARANTA.

Bart. I cannot bear to see them ; yes, you fool'd
 me ;

And thought it meritorious to abuse me,
 And glorified your wits the more you wrong'd me ;
 But I'll requite you for't ; d'ye know this writing,
 What its contents ?

Lop. A strong citation ; bless me.

Bart. Out with your beads ; bell, book and candle,
 curate.

Lop. A warrant to appear before the judges.

Bart. D'ye see these men ? they are apparitors
 That come to tell you a delightful story
 Of broken vows of celibacy, and to teach you
 What is the penalty ; laugh at me now, sir.
 What legacy will you bequeath me now,
 And pay it on the nail to stay my fury.

Lop. O, gentle sir.

Bart. Dost hope I will be gentle ?
 Thou inconsiderate, foolish, wicked curate.

Lop. Hark in your ear, hark softly.

Bart. No, no bribery :
 I'll have my swinge upon thee, sirrah, rascal,
(to Diego)

You lenten chaps, you that lay sick and mock'd me,
 Mock'd me abominably, abused me grossly,
 I'll make thee sick at heart before I leave thee ;
 And groan and die indeed, and be worth nothing,

Not worth a blessing or a passing knell,
Or sheet to cover thee, but what thou stolest ;
Stolest from the merchant with his diamond ring,
Stolest from his grave ; dost understand me now ?

Die. Have mercy on me.

Bart. Mercy on thee, mercy ?

No psalm of mercy shall save thee from hanging :
Now runagates, your turn ; seize on that lady,
(*to Leandro and Amaranta*)

She is my niece ; by all the laws of Spain,
I am her guardian and her sole protector :
Replace her in my charge.

Leand. One minute stay ;

I have not stopp'd the current of your anger,
Thinking that at its ebb, you would hear reason ;
This lady by a stronger claim than yours
Owns me as her protector ; the strong tie
That binds a wife's obedience.

Bart. Wife ? pretence ;

Obtain'd by fraud ; weak, shallow subterfuge :
If my consent be wanting, tis a reed,
A straw, a nothing : by the laws invalid :
—Seize on the lady.

Leand. Hold—the king's authority,
At all times I am ready to obey ;
But now it is another argument :
That in my friend's defence I seem'd regardless,
Must be explain'd by what I now produce.
Know you this paper ? by a lucky chance,
Amongst some records in your study, Bartolo,
I stumbled on it : look at its contents,
Shall I proclaim them ? shall I bring forth witness
To swear before a judge, th' usurious villanies
Which it contains ?

Bart. O careless fool ! o ruin !

Leand. The scroll of widows' tears and orphans'
curses.

Lop. Some comfort come at last.

Die. Most seasonably.

Leand. What will you have me say, sir?

Bart. There's no remedy ;

Expose me not in the decline of life

To public censure ; Amaranta's yours.

Your friends are free ; the injuries there writ down

I'll study to redress.

Leand. The bargain's struck :

Your hand upon it, sir.

Bart. 'Tis vain to struggle,

Take it before these witnesses.

Leand. 'Tis well, sir :

When restitution's made, this paper's yours,

Till then as evidence it rests with me.

Bart. Complaint is useless, I would fain go home ;

Wer't not for this discovery you had smarted.

(*to Lopez and Diego*)

But go in peace : when next you play the fool,

Come not to me for pastime.

Lop. We'll be hang'd first.

Die. And so with thanks we part. (*to Leandro*)

Amar. Dearest Leandro,

Though even by you protected, still I tremble.

Leand. The present fear oft heightens future pleasure :

Sweet, let us haste to the Fontana d'Oro,

For whilst Orelia's fate remains in danger,

Trust me, my duties are but half fulfilled.

[*exeunt*]

SCENE III—*a grand saloon in which are seen masks of various characters.*

a dance—after which enter OCTAVIO, ORELIA, LEANDRO, AMARANTA, GASPAR and SEBASTIAN, in masquerade.

Ore. Octavio, once more welcome : tis to you
The spell bound captive owes her wish'd release ;
In vain Leandro blew the warder's horn,

And pass'd the bridge in chivalrous attack ;
Your presence only could dissolve the charm.

Oct. Yet he, fair dame of the enchanted tower,
I judge could best effect a lady's rescue.

Leand. Grant me at least the merit of the attempt.

Gas. O certainly ; his merit with the fair :
Yet lady, I shall not forego my share in't :
Had I been silent you were still a prisoner.

Ore. I rally, sir. But could you see my heart,
Tis like a flatter'd coward ; to the battle
At length urged on, I tremble for my safety,
And fain would quit the field.

Oct. Maintain your spirits
But half an hour, and victory will smile :
Propp'd by allies so firm, your cause is won.

Gas. Our suit and service are at your command.

Seb. Dream not of danger.

Oct. Peace ; put on your masks,
Olmedo turns through yonder gaudy troop,
And bends this way with scrutinizing looks.
Now to your cue.

enter OLMEDO, who attentively regards the group.

Leand. The project shall not fail.

Olm. Tis she ! attended too by such a train.

(Leandro takes Orelia's hand and kisses it)

Leand. A sacrifice accepted at this shrine,
Is ample recompense, fair saint, for all
The perils in my pilgrimage endured.

Ore. Nay, hermit ; not with idly counting beads,
Or chanting orisons to midnight stars
By rubric forms, expect to win my favor :
Unfold yourself a prompt and gallant knight,
Prepared by valor to redress my wrongs ;
He who wins me, must like a hero dare.

Olm. *(comes forward)* She tells you true—essay
your prowess here. *(drawing)*

Leand. A sudden challenge : well, sir, I may meet it.

Olm. Have I broke in upon the house of riot,
Like dawning light into a den of fiends ;
Now madam—what your answer ? what excuse
To a wrong'd husband's feelings ? you are silent—
Some sense of shame remains, why have you forced
me

Thus to expose you to the world's reproach ?
What strange infatuation, what cursed demon
Moves you to set at nought fame, fortune, friends ?
Expostulate I cannot ; my torn heart
Resigns you to your fate : come on—vile paramour.

Ore. Stay count Olmedo : why ? you justly ask,
Thus publicly I seek to challenge censure ;
Be this my answer : public was your charge,
So be the exculpation.

Olm. Exculpation !
Before my presence to repeat offence !

Ore. What ills can rage inflict upon itself !
My friends unmask ; here is a face you know.

(*they unmask*)

Olm. Octavio !

Ore. He, sir—whose fraternal hand
I promised should alone release my chains ;
Octavio ! he—sir, from whose guardian care
You once received with ecstasy your bride,
And vow'd assurances of lasting love :
Whose is the pledge that has been best fulfilled ?

Oct. We will not trifle with your feelings, count,
Persuade yourself ev'n in a sister's cause
I'd not abet dishonor.

Olm. I believe you :
But it is passing strange ! this gentleman, (*to Leandro*)
Does he perpetually wear disguises :
Now as a soldier ! now as a mere clerk ?

Leand. The cause and the apology behold :
(*presenting Amaranta*)
The niece of Bartolo—but now my wife ;

Does she not justify the stratagem ?
But to explain appearances ; this lady, (to Orelia)
By chance discovered through the secret door,
Commission'd me to bear her ring as witness
To gain Octavio's trust ; you know what follow'd,
And how that mystery explains itself.

Gas. Let never husband trust his eyes again.

Leand. Or ears my lord, for I can tell you more ;
At Palma as I wander'd some days since,
To snatch by stealth my charmer's promised vow ;
One evening as we walk'd to shun observance
Upon your confines near the jasmine bower ;
When Amaranta own'd at last her love,
I seal'd the soft confession with a kiss:
Steps then we heard, but gliding through the boughs
We unobserved escaped.

Gas. A cunning fellow,
I always said Leandro was the man ;
So is the kiss explain'd.

Olm. I see my folly.

Leand. Little I dream'd the echo of that bliss
Could have produced such unexpected mischief.

Gas. In truth a very innocent young man !

Oct. I am the surety of Leandro's honor ;
Olmedo, take this hand and all's forgotten.

(presenting Orelia)

Olm. Welcome, as on the morn twas first bestow'd ;
I have been much to blame ; Orelia pardon.
You know my sentiments, I'll not repeat them.

Ore. Tears scarcely let me speak, I feel your kindness :

And own, had I assumed a gentler tone,
More as the wife than the offended woman,
Much anguish had been spared.

Olm. No more—no more ;
Only congratulations must be heard ;
Fair excellence, may long delights be yours :

(to Amaranta)

Leandro—fortune smiles upon our course ;

On me, my love, would censure justly fall,
Had not your kind indulgence seal'd my peace.

Ore. If others' kindness equal my indulgence,
The follies of to-day are all forgiven.

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